

3.5 Local Tools

There are many ordinances that municipalities can enact to help protect the surface water quality of their region. Washtenaw County has been recognized as a leader in illicit discharge reduction for developing an ordinance designed to prevent septic leaching by requiring onsite inspection at property transfer.⁶ The following are examples of the types of ordinances that can be implemented, as well as their general application to water quality issues.

- **Wetlands** ordinances can be established to further protect wetland areas that are protected under the Clean Water Act (CWA) as well as protect wetland areas that are not protected by the CWA.
- **Soil erosion and sediment control** ordinances can be established to help prevent the soil erosion and sedimentation of vulnerable water body areas during times when land is disturbed, such as during building construction and site preparation.
- **Post construction control** can be established to help regulate other features of a construction project that contribute to the degradation of water quality, including the inclusion of excessive amounts of impervious features or failure to mitigate for the impact of impervious features.
- **Stormwater** ordinances can be established to create criteria for the evaluation of storm water runoff from site specific projects and public works projects, like road construction.
- **Phosphorus reduction** ordinances can be established to target this specific threat to water quality. A phosphorus reduction ordinance can be used to create BMP criteria.
- **Stream and waterway buffer** ordinances can be established to limit the disturbance of waterways within a certain number of feet. This kind of ordinance can be tiered. For instance, a no-build zone could be implemented over 100ft while a non-disturb zone is implemented over 50ft.
- **Floodplain management** ordinances can be established to regulate the naturally occurring floodplain zones that surround waterways and water bodies.
- **Open space creation** ordinances can be established to support the creation of open space by providing incentives to local residents and developers to set aside land for natural feature preservation or for parks and recreational activities.

⁶ Source: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/ordinance/discharges.htm>, December 2005.

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